H.R. 5536, The Protecting American Commerce and Travel Act

H.R. 5536, The Protecting American Commerce and Travel Act A comprehensive bill to improve and enhance WHTI
Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Rep. John McHugh (R-NY)
Key Provisions
- Extends the WHTI deadline until September 15, 2009.
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- Requires one consistent implementation date for land, sea and air travel.
- Requires DHS/State to develop a plan to re-admit into the country spontaneous U.S. travelers who do not possess a passport/acceptable alternative document.
- Exempts children younger than 16 from the WHTI documentary requirements.

- Sets standards for linking in REAL ID with WHTI by requiring that DHS/State report to Congress within 120 days on the http://www.louise.house.gov Powered by Joomla! Generated: 27 July, 2006, 17:00

method, cost, time period of implementation, and security advantages, of connecting WHTI with State issued driver's licenses. The report will then be reviewed by the Government Accountability Office within 120 days.* DHS/State are prohibited from moving forward with implementing WHTI until this report has been transmitted to Congress.
- North American Travel Card (often referred to as the "PASS card" or "passport card"):
- Sets the cost at no more than \$20.
- Qualified applicants must receive the card within 10 business days of the State Department receiving the application
- All ports of entry must be equipped with the infrastructure to read the North American Travel Card by September 15, 2009.
- Vastly expands expedited traveler programs such as NEXUS and FAST:

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- Sets the price of a NEXUS/FAST card at \$20 and waives the first-time renewal fee.
- Requires that NEXUS/FAST be acceptable documents under WHTI, as well as acceptable for re-entry into the US at any border crossing.
- Requires NEXUS/FAST technology to be installed at additional crossings in North Dakota, Michigan, New York, Montana and Minnesota.
- Establishes a minimum of six new enrollment centers across the northern border, and creates new mobile enrollment centers that will sign up applicants in low-participation areas.
- Requires DHS/State to complete a cost-benefit analysis of their final WHTI plan before implementation. A cost-benefit analysis will require DHS/State to empirically prove that the security and economical benefits of WHTI outweigh the cost to travel and trade.
- Requires that DHS/State work with the Canadian and Mexican governments to ensure their citizens have the right documents to enter the US.

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- Requires DHS/State to develop and implement a WHTI public promotion campaign.
* The Government Accountability Office has already agreed to Rep. Slaughter and Rep. McHugh's request to evaluate and audit the entire implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative.

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